



TOWN OF LEE
Office of the Town Selectmen
 32 Main Street
 Lee, Massachusetts 01238

Tel. 413-243-5500
 Fax. 413-243-5523
 Website: lee.ma.us

December 14, 2015

EPA Region 1 – New England
 Frank Gardner, Regional Brownfields Contact
 5 Post Office Square
 Suite 100, Mail code: OSRR7-2
 Boston, MA 02109-3912

RE: FY16 Town of Lee Brownfields Assessment Grant

Dear Mr. Gardner:

The Town of Lee is pleased to submit this proposal to the U.S. EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant Program to conduct Phase I, II and III environmental site assessments. The goal of this proposed assessment project is to carry forward the work conducted under the Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Project and conduct assessments at the four former paper mills within the industrial area just north of the downtown. Each of these mills were once in common ownership (most recently Schweitzer-Mauduit International, Inc.) and they remain tied to one another through connected infrastructure, notably the wastewater treatment facility at the Columbia Mill.

The Town of Lee is a unique and extraordinary town of approximately 6,000 people nestled in the Housatonic River valley in the heart of the Berkshire Mountains in Western Massachusetts. Since the mid-1800s, the Town has developed a long and rich heritage as a paper mill community due in large part to the Housatonic River that flows through the north side of downtown. By 1867, Lee was home to twenty-five paper mills and ranked first in the country's paper making industry. During the Great Depression, the paper making business in Lee began a slow decline that ended in 2008 with the closing of four of the last five paper mills in the Town (which make up the target area within this proposal). The Town of Lee relied heavily on a manufacturing-based economy, with the paper mills shuttered and other industries relocating overseas, the Town has started the process of transforming itself. A major component of this transformation is the effort to revitalize downtown Lee into a vibrant social and economic center.

Currently, the presence of brownfields, vacant mills and blighted property detract from the community character of the downtown area and creates a sense of disinvestment, disregard and neglect that discourages investment in the community. The Town, working with the Lee Community Development Corporation and the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, has made a significant investment in the redevelopment planning of the Eagle Mill. However, more needs to be done to see the identified implementation strategies come to fruition. Despite the significant planning effort that has already been made, assessment is still needed in order to advance toward cleanup and redevelopment. We request a total of \$200,000 in EPA hazardous material funding and a total of \$100,000 in EPA petroleum funding.

- a. **Applicant Information:** Town of Lee
32 Main Street
Lee, MA 01238
- b. **Applicant DUNS Number:** 106622970
- c. **Funding Requested:**
i) Assessment
ii) \$200,000 and \$100,000
iii) Hazardous Substances and Petroleum Substances
iv) Community-Wide
- d. **Location:** Towns of Lee and Lenox, Berkshire County, Massachusetts
- e. **Site Address (site-specific proposals):** N/A
- f. **Project Contacts:**
i) Project Director:
Robert Nason, Town Administrator
32 Main Street
Lee, MA 01238
Telephone (413) 243-5501 Fax (413) 243-5507
rnason@town.lee.ma.us
ii) Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Official:
Patricia D. Carlino, Select Board Chair
32 Main Street
Lee, MA 01238
Telephone (413) 243-5501 Fax (413) 243-5507
- g. **Date Submitted:** December 14, 2015
- h. **Project Period:** October 2016 to October 2019 (3 years)
- i. **Population:**
i) Town Population = 5,943
ii) Target Area Population = 3,424 (Block Groups: 9141001, 9141003, and 9141004)
- j. **Other Factors Checklist:** Please see attached

Thank you for your consideration of our proposal. We look forward to working with your office on this important project. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Patricia D. Carlino
Select Board Chair

Regional Priorities Form/Other Factors Checklist

Name of Applicant: Town of Lee, Massachusetts

Regional Priorities Other Factor

If your proposed Brownfields Assessment project will advance the regional priority(ies) identified in Section I.E, please indicate the regional priority(ies) and the page number(s) for where the information can be found within your 15-page narrative. Only address the priority(ies) for the region in which your project is located. EPA will verify these disclosures prior to selection and may consider this information during the selection process. If this information is not clearly discussed in your narrative proposal, it will not be considered during the selection process.

Regional Priority Title(s): Assistance to Communities That Have Limited In-House Capacity to Manage Brownfields Projects

This regional priority includes proposed projects that provide support to communities that have limited capacity or administrative infrastructure to effectively manage brownfields programs. Proposals that include partnerships among governmental entities having shared jurisdiction over the targeted sites (e.g. state, regional authorities, local governments) relate to this priority.

Page Number(s): Page 6

Assessment Other Factors Checklist

Please identify (with an **x**) which, if any of the below items apply to your community or your project as described in your proposal. To be considered for an Other Factor, you must include the page number where each applicable factor is discussed in your proposal. EPA will verify these disclosures prior to selection and may consider this information during the selection process. If this information is not clearly discussed in your narrative proposal or in any other attachments, it will not be considered during the selection process.

	Other Factor	Page #
	<i>None of the Other Factors are applicable.</i>	
x	Community population is 10,000 or less.	1 & 2
	Applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian tribe or United States territory.	
	Targeted brownfield sites are impacted by mine-scarred land.	
x	Project is primarily focusing on Phase II assessments.	7 & 8
	Applicant demonstrates firm leveraging commitments for facilitating brownfield project completion by identifying amounts and contributors of funding in the proposal and have included documentation.	
x	Recent (2008 or later) significant economic disruption has occurred within community, resulting in a significant percentage loss of community jobs and tax base.	1, 2, 3...

	Applicant is one of the 24 recipients, or a core partner/implementation strategy party, of a “manufacturing community” designation provided by the Economic Development Administration (EDA) under the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP). To be considered, applicants must clearly demonstrate in the proposal the nexus between their IMCP designation and the Brownfield activities. Additionally, applicants must attach documentation which demonstrate either designation as one of the 24 recipients, or relevant pages from a recipient’s IMCP proposal which lists/describes the core partners and implementation	
x	Applicant is a recipient or a core partner of HUD-DOT-EPA Partnership for Sustainable Communities (PSC) grant funding or technical assistance that is directly tied to the proposed Brownfields project, and can demonstrate that funding from a PSC grant/technical assistance has or will benefit the project area. Examples of PSC grant or technical assistance include a HUD Regional Planning or Challenge grant, DOT Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER), or EPA Smart Growth Implementation or Building Blocks Assistance, etc. To be considered, applicant must attach documentation.	14
x	Applicant is a recipient of an EPA Brownfields Area-Wide Planning grant.	1, 5, 6...

**U.S. Department of Housing
and Urban Development**

Certification of Consistency with Sustainable Communities Planning and Implementation

I certify that the proposed activities/projects in this application are consistent with the Livability Principles advanced by communities in the FY2010 Sustainable Communities Regional Planning and HUD-DOT Challenge Grants.

(Type or clearly print the following information)

Applicant Name:

Name of the Federal Program to
which the applicant is applying:

Name of the Preferred Sustainable
Communities Status Community:

I further certify that:

- (1) The applicant is engaged in activities, that in consultation with the designated Point of Contact of the HUD designated Preferred Sustainability Status Communities, further the purposes of the regional planning grant program;
- (2) The applicant's proposed activities either directly reflect the Livability Principles cited and contained in HUD's General Section to the FY2011 NOFAs or will result in the delivery of services that are consistent with the goals of the Livability Principles;
- (3) The applicant has committed to maintain an on-going relationship with the HUD Preferred Sustainability Status Communities for the purposes of being part of the planning and implementation processes in the designated area.

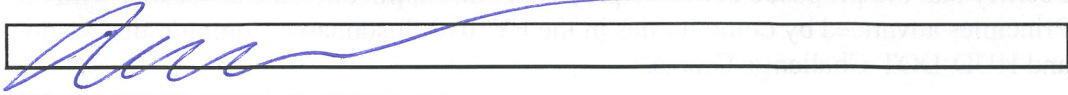
Name of the Official Authorized to Certify the Preferred

Sustainable Communities Status meets

the above criteria to receive bonus points: **Nathaniel W. Karns**

Title: **Executive Director**

Organization: **Berkshire Regional Planning Commission**

Signature: 

Date **12/09/2015**

(mm/dd/yyyy)

RANKING CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT GRANTS

1. Community Need

The Town of Lee is a small town of just 5,922 people in the Housatonic River valley in the Berkshire Mountains in Western Massachusetts. Lee has a historic New England downtown complete with a town green, towering church spire and small storefronts on Main Street.

The Town developed its legacy as a paper mill community in the mid-1800s. At that time, the Housatonic River that flows through the downtown was an asset to industrial development. By 1867, Lee was home to twenty-five paper mills and ranked first in the country's paper making industry. During the Great Depression, the paper making business in Lee began a slow decline that ended in 2008 with the closing of four of the last five paper mills in the Town. The Town relied on a manufacturing based economy and has been significantly impacted by the closing of all four mills. To make matters worse, these mills are located within 1½ miles of one another on the edge of the downtown. The Lee Community Development Corporation prepared a report that confirms the need to cleanup and redevelop blighted and contaminated properties near the downtown area. The four mills and the area surrounding them make up the Target Area for this project, which are also the catalyst sites for an ongoing FY13 EPA Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Grant.

1.a. Targeted Community and Brownfields

1.a.i. Targeted Community Description

This assessment project will build upon the efforts undertaken through the Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Project (AWP) which focuses on the same target area. The Target Area is a 700 acre historic, industrial area in the midst of densely developed residential neighborhoods, former mill housing and the downtown. The Housatonic River flows through the center of the area and four former paper mills (Niagara Mill, Greylock Mill, Columbia Mill and Eagle Mill) can be found within a mile and a half from one another. At one time, all of the mills were in common ownership and the mills are still connected by shared infrastructure, including a wastewater treatment facility. Since closing their doors in 2008 the mills remain vacant and unproductive, potentially contaminated and casting a shadow of unknown over the area.

The Target Area not only includes the industrial area comprised of the vacant mills, but also one of the most impoverished communities within the Town. Data is not available for the specific Target Area; however, the majority of the Target Area, including the mills, is located within U.S. Census Block Group 9141003. According to the newest data available from the US Census American Community Survey 2010-2014, the poverty rate within this Census Block Group is 12.1%; significantly higher than both the Town as a whole and the State. The median household income for this section of the Town is a noteworthy \$32,857, approximately half the national median household income. Even more significant, unemployment within the area is 12.6%, significantly higher than the national rate of 9.1%.¹

1.a.ii. Demographic Information

Demographic information displayed in the table below is American Community Survey 2009-2013 and Bureau of Labor Statistics consistent with the Sample Format included within the guidelines.

¹ US Census American Community Survey 2010/2014

Table 1: Demographic Information

	Targeted Community	Town	County	State	National
	U.S. Census Block Group 9141003				
Population ¹ :	1,012	5,825	130,545	6,605,058	311,536,594
Unemployment ² :	N/A	3.7%	5.1%	4.9%	5.3%
Poverty Rate ¹ :	0.0%	5.4%	9.8%	8.1%	11.3%
Percent Minority ¹ :	0.0%	4.2%	9.8%	24.3%	36.7%
Median Household Income ¹ :	\$29,496	\$57,683	\$48,450	\$66,866	\$53,046

¹ Data are from the 2009-2013 American Community Survey² Data are from the Bureau of Labor Statistics

The closing of the four large paper mills in 2008 resulted in an economic downturn that has had a sudden negative impact on the small Town of Lee (pop. 5,922)². According to the newest data available from the US Census American Community Survey 2010-2014, the unemployment rate in this traditionally blue collar town nearly doubled from 4.7% in 2009 to 7.6% in 2014 due in large part to the closing of the mills that shed 215 of the 540 manufacturing jobs located within the Town (2015 Massachusetts Employment & Wage Report (ES-202)). In the last five years, the largest number of all jobs gained is in accommodation and food services, health care and social assistance and retail trade. The 2015 MA Employment & Wage Report (ES-202) shows that the annual average wage rates for these sectors were only \$23,088, \$30,836 and \$26,364 respectively, compared to \$79,404 for the manufacturing sector. The median household income representative of the Target Area is nearly half the national average and a significant portion of renters are spending over 30% of their income on rent. Further evidence of the hard economic times in Lee is the fact that the number of households receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits (SNAP) increased by 411% from 2009 to 2014.²

1.a.iii. Brownfields

Currently, the presence of brownfields, vacant mills and blighted property detract from the community character of the downtown area and create a sense of disregard and neglect that discourages investment in the community. As stated previously, the Target Area is a historic, industrial area in the midst of the downtown. The target sites are four former paper mills located within a mile and a half from one another that all closed in 2008. Seven years later the mills remain vacant, unproductive, potentially contaminated, casting a shadow of unknown over the downtown. As mentioned above, these sites have impacted the target community with the loss of 215 of the 540 manufacturing jobs.³ A coinciding spike in the unemployment rate was also experienced when the unemployment rate nearly doubled from 4.7% in 2009 to 8.4% in 2014.⁴

The Eagle Mill is a prominent feature at the end of Main Street visible from downtown. It stands vacant, degrading the character of the businesses surrounding it and serving as a constant reminder of the shutdown. Potential contamination and fear of the unknown deters investors and developers from repurposing sites like this. A Phase I ESA at the Eagle Mill identified eight recognized environmental conditions (RECs) related to potential soil, groundwater and surface water

² US Census American Community Survey 2010/2014³ 2015 MA Employment & Wage Report (ES-202)⁴ US Census American Community Survey 2010/2014

contamination. The historic industrial use of the site included the use and storage of petroleum products, PCB-containing materials, and the likely use and storage of solvents and dyes related to the paper manufacturing process. Several areas were identified in which there had been potential releases of petroleum contamination. In addition, potential surface water and/or sediment contamination in the adjacent Housatonic River may be a result of the paper manufacturing plants within the target area. At one time, all of the mills were in common ownership (most recently Schweitzer-Mauduit International, Inc.) and the mills are still connected by shared infrastructure. Due to this fact it is anticipated that similar RECs would be identified at each of the mills.

1.a.iv. Cumulative Environmental Issues

The General Electric/Housatonic River Cleanup Site is one of the largest PCB cleanup projects in the Country and no cleanup activities have taken place in Lee. Lee is very concerned with the high levels of PCBs in the Housatonic River, which flows through the Target Area and the north side of the downtown. For a period of forty years, General Electric (GE) discharged untold quantities of PCBs into the River. Since that time, PCBs have been carried downstream accumulating in the sediment behind mill dams, oxbows and other slow moving sections of the river. Because of PCB contamination, residents have lost the ability to harvest fish, frogs and waterfowl from the river. Some of the highest concentrations of PCBs in the county have been recorded in Woods Pond, a section of the river just upstream from the Niagara Mill. EPA Region 1 issued its Intended Final Decision on GE's Reissued RCRA Permit in September 2015. The *Cleanup of the Housatonic "Rest of River" Socioeconomic Impact Study* (June 2012) indicated that residents near the remediation site or along hazardous materials trucking routes may experience a diminished quality of life. GE has proposed siting two landfills within Lee to dispose of dredged PCB-laden river sediments and floodplain soils, the first site across from the Niagara Mill and the second site near the town's drinking water reservoir.

Lee is referred to as the "Gateway to the Berkshires" due to its location off Exit 2 on Interstate 90. Traffic exiting Interstate 90 and heading north must travel right through the downtown. It comes as no surprise that according to EPA's EJview, Lee is a non-attainment area for Ozone 8-hour. The Lee Traffic Study concluded that "the high number and proportion of trucks has significant impacts to residents and visitors in downtown Lee, including detrimental air quality issues, noise impacts and potentially serious safety impacts." Rte. 20 makes up the eastern border of the Target Area and experiences a significant amount of truck traffic serving as the primary northern artery.

The sites within the Target Area remain vacant and blighted with immediate, negative impacts to the environment. As previously stated, the Phase I ESA at the Eagle Mill identified a variety of RECs related to potential soil, groundwater and surface water contamination and it is anticipated that similar RECs would be identified at each of the mills. Left unabated, these substances can migrate into the groundwater and off-site into wetlands and other sensitive environmental areas, contaminating food webs and negatively impacting all species within the local ecosystem.

1.b. **Impacts on Targeted Community**

Disproportionate Impacts: Some of the lowest income families live in dense neighborhoods within the Target Area that were once mill housing. The Housatonic River, contaminated with PCBs, runs through the Target Area significantly and directly impacting the Target Community. The existence of brownfields within the Target Area fosters a sense of disinvestment, disregard and neglect within an already struggling community. The mills in the Target Area are vacant, boarded-up, or

underused, but the neighborhoods that were built around them still exist. Abandoned and derelict structures are blights to the community and debris pose threats to the health and safety of the residents who live in these neighborhoods and these sites have been sites of illegal dumping. The Comprehensive Downtown Strategy developed for the Town recognized the desire of the neighborhood to cleanup these blighted and contaminated properties.

Sensitive Populations: Over half of the people within the Target Area can be classified as belonging to a sensitive population as indicated by the following chart. **No health data exists** for the Target Area or even the Town as a whole. Assessments are needed to determine *whether*, and to what degree, sensitive populations are at risk from possible exposure to harmful contaminants.

Table 2: Percentage of Target Area Residents Belonging to a Sensitive Population	
Minorities	5.8%
Over 65 Years Old	20.1%
Children	17.7%
Women of Child Bearing Age	14.1%
<i>Source: US Census American Community Survey 2010/2014</i>	

The **only available health data** is through the Massachusetts Community Health Information Profile, which maintains **county-level data** to assess health needs, monitor health status indicators, and evaluate health programs. According to their data, the rate of asthma related emergency room visits, deaths from chronic disease, and breast cancer deaths in the County are all above the state rates. Notable differences exist for both women of child bearing age and minorities. Overall breast cancer incidence in Berkshire County is slightly higher than the state as a whole. However, breast cancer incidence in the region is disproportionately higher than in the state for minority women with a rate of 178 vs 123 for black women, 223 vs 81 for Asian women and 172 vs 72 for Hispanic women. The incidence of bronchus and lung cancer in Black non-Hispanic men in the region is significantly higher (146.5) than that of the state (89.2).

Public Health & Welfare: The mills may have hazardous materials and/or petroleum contamination that pose a threat to human health, the environment and the welfare of sensitive populations. Contamination from these four mills may expose residents and sensitive populations through exposure routes such as inhalation, ingestion and dermal contact. The health concerns of the suspected contaminants (chlorinated solvents, petroleum products, PCBs, and heavy metals) include higher incidences of cancer, harm to the immune system, reproductive system, nervous system, and endocrine system. The potential presence of contamination makes their neighborhoods and communities less livable and impairs the quality of life for the residents within the target community. People in the target community **do not know whether their health and welfare is threatened** and rumors persist of secret discharges of contaminated materials being conducted under the cloak of darkness in an area now nicknamed by residents as “The Black Field”.

1.c. Financial Need

1.c.i. Economic Conditions

Local economic conditions have been made worse due to industrial decline, the closure of four paper mills and declining state aid. The closure of the mills has had a tremendous impact on the small Town of Lee with the loss of hundreds of jobs and the resulting vacant, underused and blighted properties adjacent to downtown. The perception of contamination and the unknown condition of these sites causes the sites to remain stagnant. Environmental site assessment is

needed to prevent these sites from rapidly deteriorating and to implement the recommendations of the ongoing AWP. Funding needs to be secured in order for that to happen.

As a small rural community, Lee simply does not have the financial resources to address all of its brownfield issues. Municipalities in Massachusetts depend heavily on local aid from the state and local property taxes. The Town has experienced a 7.0% (\$261,184) reduction in local aid beginning in 2009. (MA Department of Revenue, Cherry Sheets: 2009 – 2016). In instances when local aid is decreased the Town must either raise property taxes or cut services. The recent economic recession has further strained Lee's financial resources since property values have declined but the cost of services continues to rise. Lee residents simply cannot afford further tax increases in order to begin to address its brownfield issues, especially in light of the unemployment spike and recent paper mill closings. The average single family tax bill in the Town is consistently the tenth or eleventh highest (of 32) in Berkshire County (MA Department of Revenue). In order to close its budget gap, the Town has already increased the average tax bill by 39.3% over the last ten years and instituted the largest single tax rate increase in more than a decade.

The Town's financial resources are also strained by its limited ability to draw on other sources of economic development funding. As a small rural community, Lee does not have the benefit of receiving entitlement funds from HUD's Community Development Block Grant Program or other urban-focused programs. As a densely developed industrial town Lee is ineligible for many programs available to larger cities **and** to more rural towns. Despite being the gateway to the region via I-90, the Town is not recognized as a "Gateway City" and is not eligible for funding limited to communities with that designation. The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) operates a regional Brownfields program that includes assessment, but no funding is available as BRPC has obligated all of the funding from its FY13 EPA Assessment award.

1.c.ii. Economic Effects of Brownfields

The presence of the four former paper mills within the target area has a negative impact on Lee's struggling economy through lost jobs, a reduced tax base, lost business opportunities, and depressed property values. These brownfields sites occupy valuable limited commercial and industrial space that could otherwise be placed back into productive use and provide residents with much needed jobs. Their location along the contaminated Housatonic River and the presence or suspicion of contamination further complicates the re-development process. Private developers have expressed interest in these sites, but have walked away telling the Lee CDC that they are simply not willing to assume the risk associated with potential contamination.

The economic effect of a blighted site should not be discounted. In 2007, the Town designated a section of its downtown area as a blighted and decadent area in accordance with Massachusetts law due in part to its aging infrastructure and a finding that nearly 45% of the buildings in the downtown area were in either poor or fair condition. Since closing their doors in 2008, the mills have only added to these blighted conditions and sense of community disinvestment.

In addition to the impacts of these former paper mills, the EPA recently commissioned the *Cleanup of the Housatonic "Rest of River" Socioeconomic Impact Study* (June 2012). This work indicates that over the span of several years, while river PCB cleanup activities and construction are taking place, the impacted municipalities stand to lose more than \$350 million in economic losses due to reduced real estate tax and tourism revenues, and damages to municipal infrastructure systems.

2. Project Description and Feasibility of Success

2.a. Project Description

2.a.i. Project Description

The project that will be funded under this grant directly aligns with the community's land use and revitalization plans, most specifically the AWP. The Target Area for this project is the subject of the AWP, which includes the four former paper mills just north of the downtown. This project will implement the recommendations of the AWP which is currently being drafted. The timing is perfect for these assessment grant funds as the AWP will be completed by September 2016 coinciding with the start date for this project.

The goals of this project will be accomplished through site-specific and non-site-specific assessment activities. Non-site-specific tasks include obtaining contractor services to provide technical assistance and oversight, conducting public outreach and preparing outreach materials. Site-specific tasks include performing assessments, preparing sampling plans, and enrolling appropriate sites in the MassDEP's State Voluntary Cleanup Program, and determining whether further assessment, cleanup, or no action is required. Based on the RECs identified through a Phase I ESA at the Eagle Mill contamination from hazardous substances and petroleum products are anticipated. Contamination may be comingled in certain instances and isolated in others.

The redevelopment strategy currently being developed under the AWP includes:

Eagle Mill: affordable housing, hotel, commercial spaces and restaurant

Columbia Mill: small industrial, manufacturing and distribution, housing, and offices

Greylock Mill: small industrial, manufacturing and distribution (incubator spaces) and classrooms

Niagara Mill: micro-brewery or craft food

The location of the Target Area in relation to the downtown and the dense residential neighborhoods that surround it provides a distinct opportunity for the successful redevelopment and marketing of the properties within the area. In addition, the community has shown strong support for a multi-use trail along the river through the project area offering alternative modes of transportation to new jobs created at the sites. This concept is supported by the current owners and prospective developers and the Lee Bike Committee is currently undertaking work to finalize the route and prepare conceptual designs for the trail.

2.a.ii. Project Timing

As a small rural community, Lee does not have the resources to hire a full time community development staff. Like most other rural municipalities in the County, the Town relies on its regional planning agency, BRPC, for assistance with grant management. BRPC has extensive experience conducting EPA Brownfields Projects and has successfully closed four assessment grants. The Town intends to enter into an inter-municipal agreement with BRPC for assistance in meeting the project management, procurement and reporting requirements of the grant. EPA has determined that the use of an inter-municipal agreement between a municipality in Massachusetts and a regional planning agency complies with 40 CFR Part 31.36.

The Town has already begun working with the property owners to obtain site access. It is anticipated that the Work Plan will be submitted to EPA in July 2016 and that the pre-award period will be utilized to secure the services of a QEP no later than December 2016. The Town has experience working with BRPC to procure services through a formal bid process as well as through utilizing approved state-wide contracts. The QEP will then be authorized to prepare a

recommended strategy and approach, proceed with Phase I work, prepare scopes and budgets for Phase II work, and initiate QAPP development. Phase I work is typically completed in approximately four weeks from approval and can be expedited if necessary. Subsurface sampling can begin once the QAPP is approved; typically no more than two months from site approval.

2.a.iii. Site Selection

This project will target the four former paper mills north of downtown. The Town of Lee and BRPC have already begun the process of educating the two property owners (who own the four target properties) as to the site assessment process, liability issues, clean up options and funding sources. The property owners have agreed to allow access to the sites and cooperate in any way necessary. A written agreement will be obtained from the property owners committing to participate in the process and ensuring access to the sites.

This project focuses primarily on Phase II Environmental Assessments (ESA). It is expected that all four of the target sites will require Phase II ESAs. A Phase II ESA for the Eagle Mill was conducted through the EPA Targeted Brownfields Assessment Program; however, additional assessment is needed. ASTM Phase I Assessments may be needed to meet the standards for EPA's All Appropriate Inquiry if any of the sites are sold or otherwise transfer ownership. Site reuse and cleanup planning may be needed to develop remedial action plans if contamination is identified above state standards.

BRPC has developed the following site ranking criteria that the Town will utilize to prioritize the sequencing of assessments among the four sites.

1. Risk Factors - proximity to sensitive populations, local and regional benefit, health risks;
2. Site Characteristics - property status, property size, proximity to existing infrastructure;
3. Economic Development - redevelopment potential, marketability, proximity to urban core, ability to leverage funds;
4. Sustainable Development - promotes concentrated development, access to existing infrastructure and utilities, provides for alternative housing options, encourages open space, creates job opportunities; and
5. Cost/benefit Elements - community involvement, financial issues, liability considerations, environmental assessment, and compliance with local, state and federal requirements.

2.b. **Task Description and Budget Table**

2.b.i. Task Description

Task 1 Cooperative Agreement Oversight⁵: A member of the project team will attend the National EPA Brownfields Conference (1 conference attendee: airfare/lodging/per diem = \$2,500). This is reflected under the Contractual portion of the budget, since it is anticipated that a staff member from BRPC will attend rather than Town personnel. Required EPA quarterly reports, updates to the ACRES database and requests for reimbursement will be prepared and submitted by BRPC staff with assistance from the QEP. BRPC will ensure compliance with all applicable federal cross-cutting requirements including consulting with the state historical preservation officer. We estimate BRPC staff time of \$9,000 and QEP expenses of \$4,850 = \$13,850. The Town will provide additional in-kind support to manage and develop the Brownfields program at no cost to the grant. Outputs include 12 Quarterly reports and MBE/WBE reporting.

⁵ Hazardous and petroleum funds are further distinguished within the budget table.

Task 2 Community Outreach & Engagement⁶: The Town and BRPC will engage the community surrounding the target area, local neighborhood groups, lenders, realtors, property owners, community health officials, and others in the process of conducting this project. The Town will hold a public meeting to seek comment on the proposed work plan and initiate discussion about site-specific environmental assessment plans. We estimate BRPC staff time of \$16,150 and QEP expenses of \$8,075 = \$24,225. Travel will include necessary travel for public meetings (~130 miles at \$0.56/mile = \$75). Supplies will include meeting flyers, handouts for public meetings and site factsheets (6 meetings total \$1,000 and copies of 4 site factsheets \$500 = \$1,500). Outputs include meeting minutes from public meetings and presentation materials.

Task 3: Phase I Site Assessments⁴: The selected qualified environmental professional will conduct Phase I Environmental Site Assessments. The work will be completed in accordance with standards established by the American Society of Testing Material (ASTM) standard E1527-13 as well as the EPA's "All Appropriate Inquiry" rule. The Town and BRPC will continue to work with private property owners to make the Phase I ESA process collaborative and participative. We have estimated \$5,200 for Phase I ESAs at large sites (3 sites x \$5,200/site = \$15,600). Outputs include generation of 3 Phase I Assessment reports.

Task 4: Phase II Site Assessments⁴: The purpose of the Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (Phase II) is to confirm or dismiss the presence of hazardous materials and petroleum products in accordance with ASTM 1903-97(2002) standard. During Phase II, the qualified environmental professional will first prepare a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) for the overall program and Site-Specific QAPPs for each Phase II site for EPA approval. We will work with the property owners to obtain access and will establish reporting responsibility should state or federal notification thresholds be met. Due to the large size and long industrial history associated with former mills, we have estimated ~\$54,000 for a typical QAPP/Phase II Assessment (4 sites x \$54,375/site = \$217,500). Outputs include generation of 4 Phase II Assessment reports.

Task 5: Site Reuse and Cleanup Planning⁴: The remediation/reuse planning process will be conducted following EPA's Greener Remediation guidance and will begin with a public meeting to actively solicit feedback and input from the target community and involved stakeholders regarding potential reuse of the sites. The Phase II data and landowner and community reuse proposal(s) will be analyzed to develop a remedial alternatives plan for each site based on the specific or potential reuse scenario(s). The plan will include remedial actions for each identified contaminant that exceeds applicable Massachusetts regulatory guidelines. Remedial actions will be evaluated based on cost, feasibility, and effectiveness in protecting human health and the environment. We have estimated \$8,250 for a typical Reuse/Cleanup planning document (3 sites x \$8,250/site = \$24,750). Outputs include generation of 3 Reuse/Cleanup planning documents.

2.b.ii Budget Table

Eighty-six percent (86%) of the proposed budget will be spent on site assessment activities including Phase I & II Assessments and Site Reuse and Cleanup Planning. Approximately seventy-two (72%) of the budget is slated toward Phase II Assessments.

⁶ Hazardous and petroleum funds are further distinguished within the budget table.

(Programmatic costs only)	Project Tasks					
	Task 1 Cooperative Agreement Oversight	Task 2 Community Outreach & Engagement	Task 3 Phase I ESAs	Task 4 Phase II ESAs	Task 5 Site Reuse & Cleanup Planning	Total
Personnel Hazardous Petroleum	-	-	-	-	-	\$0 \$0
Fringe Benefits Hazardous Petroleum	-	-	-	-	-	\$0 \$0
Travel Hazardous Petroleum	-	\$50 \$25	-	-	-	\$50 \$25
Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	\$0
Supplies Hazardous Petroleum	-	\$1,000 \$500	-	-	-	\$1,000 \$500
Contractual Hazardous Petroleum	\$10,900 \$5,450	\$16,150 \$8,075	\$10,400 \$5,200	\$145,000 \$72,500	\$16,500 \$8,250	\$198,950 \$99,475
Total	\$16,350	\$25,800	\$15,600	\$217,500	\$24,750	\$300,000

2.c. Ability to Leverage

A combined total of \$150,000 has been invested through the 43D Expedited Permitting Grant Program funded through the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development and MassDevelopment toward redevelopment planning for the Eagle Mill. The Town has leveraged an additional \$12,000 in the form of a Phase I ESA from the Berkshire Brownfields Program for the Eagle Mill and EPA has invested an additional \$117,000 through the TBA for Eagle Mill and \$175,000 through the AWP. The Town has leveraged another \$30,000 in private funds toward design and engineering to address infrastructure issues related to fire suppression needs for development. Lee has sought additional sources of funding including an application submitted to MassWorks to construct needed infrastructure improvements, cleanup and redevelopment activities. The Town has committed in-kind services to this project and is not requesting funds to support town personnel. The Town has been successful in its efforts to obtain funding and will continue to leverage funds to support this initiative. For example, Lee has been designated as an Economically Distressed Area and an Economic Target Area, which makes it eligible for economic development financing from several agencies including:

- The Massachusetts Office of Business Development's (MOBD) local EDA Program has provided the region with the greatest leveraging capacity. Under this program, any community or neighborhood designated as an ETA can access tax credits (up to 5%), abandoned building tax deductions, local property tax exemptions, and tax increment financing to developers to fund 100% of project budgets or to provide gap financing.

- MassDevelopment administers the Brownfields Remediation Loan Program, which provides flexible loans for the environmental clean-up of brownfield sites located in a designated EDA. The local office of MassDevelopment is located in nearby Pittsfield and several communities in the County have accessed these funds.
- The MassWorks Infrastructure Program provides a one-stop shop for municipalities seeking public infrastructure funding to support economic development and job creation and retention, housing development at a density of at least 4 units to the acre (both market and affordable units) and transportation improvements to enhance safety in small, rural communities. The MassWorks Infrastructure Program is administered by the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, in cooperation with the Department of Transportation and Executive Office for Administration & Finance.
- BRPC administers an EPA Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund, which can provide subordinated loans and sub-grants for Brownfields Cleanup to fill a funding gap.

3. Community Engagement and Partnerships

3.a. Plan for Involving Targeted Community & Other Stakeholders; and Communicating Project Progress

3.a.i. Community Involvement Plan

The community has been involved and will continue to be involved. Lee has longstanding partnerships with stakeholders that were developed under a previous 43D Expedited Permitting Grant Program. Currently, a Stakeholders Group has been created and meets regularly in support of the ongoing AWP. The stakeholder group is made up of representatives from MassDEP, MassDevelopment, 1Berkshires, the Housatonic Valley Association, Mill Renaissance LLC, Niagara Worldwide, Lee CDC, Lee Chamber of Commerce, Lee Bike Path Committee, former mill managers, interested citizens, and the Lenox Planning Board as well as, the Lee Town Administrator and BRPC.

Previous outreach has revealed that the redevelopment of blighted/abandoned sites is a top priority among residents. Consensus goals for revitalization include river access and greenspace creation, business development, and the creation of mixed-use development that includes commercial space, residential development, hotel space and space for educational institutions. The planning process conducted under the 43D Local Permitting Program was an essential step in building partnerships and in developing consensus goals for re-use for the Eagle Mill. Further planning necessary to move toward implementation and expand these efforts outward to include the other three former paper mills is being conducted through the AWP.

3.a.ii Communicating Progress

The Town and its partners have a proven track record in communicating progress and will continue to do so. The community will provide crucial input to inform the planning, assessment and implementation process. Public meetings will be held to seek comment on the proposed work plan, and inform the public about planned assessment activities and their results. Participation will be solicited through mass media (newspapers, Town and BRPC websites, etc.) and outreach through the project partners. The stakeholders group formed through the AWP will provide oversight throughout the assessment and planning process. As part of the AWP efforts, a visioning event has been held and an additional charette will be conducted and public input will be sought for both

overall goals and site-specific issues. These activities will be completed before work under this project begins.

3.b. Partnerships with Government Agencies

3.b.i. State Environmental Authority

Assessment activities will be conducted in accordance with the state's cleanup law, Chapter 21E, and cleanup regulations, the Massachusetts Contingency Plan (MCP). A private Licensed Site Professional (LSP) will be hired to conduct site assessments and, ultimately, cleanup activities. The MCP requires all persons to notify the MADEP of a release or threat of release of oil and/or hazardous material and/or to perform one or more response actions. The DEP's Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup takes an active role in promoting brownfields redevelopment projects and offers technical assistance through single points of contact at each regional office. Site-specific information is made available through the regional office.

3.b.ii. Other Relevant Governmental Partnerships

US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): This project will be conducted through a cooperative agreement and the EPA Project Officer will be substantially involved in overseeing the work.

The Town has worked with EPA to complete a Cleanup Project at 25 School Street and to conduct the AWP. The Town has established a strong relationship with our EPA Project Officer and have regularly established check-ins as part of the AWP. The Town has also worked closely and effectively with the EPA Project Officer that is the point person for the TBA at the Eagle Mill.

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC): BRPC is the official area-wide planning agency in Berkshire County with comprehensive planning responsibilities which include land use, transportation, economic development, and environmental management. BRPC operates the Berkshire Brownfields Program which has successfully managed several EPA Brownfield Assessment Grants and an EPA Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund. The Town has entered into an intermunicipal agreement with BRPC to manage their Brownfields Cleanup Grant and AWP and anticipate that they will enter into a similar agreement for this assessment project. BRPC will provide project management, including providing planning and Brownfields expertise, and conducting outreach to citizens and the business community. Contact Person - Melissa Provencher, Senior Planner / Brownfields Program Coordinator

Economic Development Agencies: The two primary state economic development agencies are MOBD and MassDevelopment. MassDevelopment provides a variety of funding programs, including reuse planning and brownfields programs and has coordinated with regional and local officials and the various programs of MOBD to achieve successful clean-up and reuse of sites. MassDevelopment participates actively in the Stakeholders Group for the AWP.

Town of Lenox, MA: The Niagara Mill property straddles the town line and the building lies just within the boundaries of the Town of Lenox. The mill has historically been in common ownership with the Greylock, Columbia, and Eagle Mill. As previously stated, the mills are interconnected by their infrastructure including a wastewater treatment facility. For these reasons, the Niagara Mill has been included within the target area for this assessment project. The Towns have a strong working relationship, including active participation in the AWP, and will work together in decision making and will play an active role in the development of implementation strategies.

3.c. Partnerships with Community Organizations**3.c.i. Community Organization Description & Role**

Lee Community Development Corporation: The Lee CDC is a non-profit community-based organization dedicated to fostering economic development and employment in Lee. It acts as the lead organization in promoting economic development in town and is currently an active participant in the Stakeholders Group under the AWP. The CDC will organize and facilitate community-wide and neighborhood discussions and involvement over the sites and their potential for reuse and how both neighborhood and town-wide need will be met. The CDC will assist in working with the mill building owners. Contact Person - Marilyn Hansen

Housatonic Valley Association (HVA): HVA works to conserve the natural character and environmental health of their communities by protecting and restoring the lands and waters of the Housatonic Watershed for this and future generations. HVA brings together a wide range of people and organizations that are deeply concerned about the resources and environmental quality of the Housatonic River Valley. HVA is also an active member of the Stakeholders Group under the AWP. HVA will assist with this project by hosting presentations and community meetings, providing space online and on paper for project updates and notices, provide expertise on certain aspects of the project, and provide appropriate educational programs. Contact Person - Dennis Regan, Berkshire Director

Lee Chamber of Commerce: The Lee Chamber of Commerce is the largest business supported organization in Lee, which works to promote and grow the Town of Lee. The purposes and objectives of the corporation are to promote and advance the economic, civic and social welfare of Lee. The Lee Chamber of Commerce will assist with this project by providing e-newsletter project updates and providing important community notices or critical new information on the Chamber's website. Contact Person - Coleen Henry, Director

3.c.ii. Letters of Commitment

Letters of firm commitment from all of the community organizations above are attached.

4. Project Benefits**4.a. Health and/or Welfare and Environment****4.a.i. Health and/or Welfare Benefits**

Health: Through the successful completion of this project the target community will know, for the first time, whether their health and welfare is threatened by these sites. The rumors of secret discharges and dumping in "The Black Field" will be put to rest. If contamination does pose a threat to people's health a strategy to address threats will be developed and communicated to the public. The combination of planning conducted through the AWP and assessment conducted under this project will foster a sense of investment and community pride. The mills in the Target Area will be poised for redevelopment and open foundations and debris will no longer pose a threat to the health and safety of the residents who live in these neighborhoods.

Potential exposure routes including inhalation, ingestion and dermal contact will be addressed. If discovered, a plan will be developed to cleanup contamination from hazardous materials and petroleum products (i.e., chlorinated solvents, gasoline, heating fuel, PCBs, and heavy metals) reducing risks of cancer, harm to the immune system, reproductive system, nervous system, and endocrine system. The result will be livable communities that support a high quality of life.

Welfare: Prospective developers are poised to redevelop and repurpose these sites once the unknown environmental concerns are assessed. In particular, redevelopment plans for the Eagle Mill include affordable housing, a hotel, restaurant, and commercial spaces. Once assessment is complete, the developer plans to utilize the Housatonic River as an asset in developing this riverfront. The developer is working closely with the Town to incorporate public spaces and a Riverwalk with a pedestrian bridge in envisioned. This is consistent with ongoing efforts to develop a bike path through the Town. The work of the AWP has identified the potential to connect all four properties through a riverwalk, walking and bicycling paths. Such paths could provide routes connecting residents to jobs created within the redeveloped mill sites. If successful, the redevelopment will connect these areas to one another and the downtown resulting in both recreational and health benefits.

4.a.ii. Environmental Benefits

The environmental benefits anticipated from this grant include cleanup of the environment and restoration of resources. These benefits will address the environmental challenges that the community currently faces. The community character of the downtown will be restored through the cleanup of the brownfields, vacant mills and blighted property which will encourage additional investment in the community. The removal of contamination will allow investors and developers to repurpose the mills. Based on the eight recognized environmental conditions (RECs) identified at the Eagle Mill potential soil, groundwater and surface water contamination will be remediated. This project will cutoff the pathways for environmental contamination that could otherwise result from the historic industrial use, storage of petroleum products, PCB-containing materials, and the storage of solvents and dyes related to the paper manufacturing process.

The Housatonic River that runs through the Target Area and parallel to the downtown can be a strong draw. A report by Feiden Associates commissioned by the Lee CDC in 2007 identified [the River as downtown Lee's greatest and yet most underutilized recreation, economic, and cultural resource. Through this project, the Housatonic River will no longer be vulnerable from the potential surface water and/or sediment as a result of paper manufacturing potential threats to the river and to groundwater will be remediated. The public open spaces and riverwalks previously described will create potential benefits to the public health and welfare as well as the environment.

4.b. Environmental Benefits from Infrastructure Reuse/Sustainable Reuse

4.b.i. Planning, Policies, and Other Tools

Lee is committed to sustainable redevelopment. The reuse scenarios being developed under the AWP and discussed above will ensure that sustainable development approaches will be utilized to encourage brownfield site reuse in ways that provide new jobs, commercial opportunities, and open space amenities to an existing neighborhood.

The "Stretch Code" is one example of a tool that the Town will utilize to implement sustainable development. The Stretch Code is an appendix to the State Building Code which includes additional energy efficiency standards. The Stretch Code requires all new residential and most commercial construction to achieve approximately 20% better energy efficiency than that required by the base Building Code. The energy savings is achieved by moving to a performance based code instead of requiring the installation of specific energy measures. The Town will work with the developers to ensure that redevelopment conforms to the requirements of the Stretch Code.

Another example of a planning tool includes the Town's initiative to adopt a 40R overlay district which will encourage increased density, specifically within the Eagle and Columbia Mill sites. All four mills are served by municipal and private infrastructure. The Town has been establishing strong working relationships with the developers involved in these sites and, although it may not be mandated, will encourage and foster green remediation, construction and demolition materials recycling, diesel emissions reductions, and renewable energy.

4.b.ii. Integrating Equitable Development or Livability Principles

This project will be carried out consistent with the principles for the Partnership for Sustainable Communities (PSC). The Town of Lee is part of the PSC through its EPA Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Project and its role as a core partner in BRPC's 2010 HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant. This project will aim to (1) provide more transportation choices, (2) promote equitable, affordable housing, (3) increase economic competitiveness, (4) support existing communities, (5) leverage federal investment, and (6) value communities and neighborhoods. Increasing the economic competitiveness of the Town is the foundation for this project. The target area provides many opportunities such as:

- Transportation choices including public transportation, walking, bike path and "riverwalk";
- Affordable housing through the redevelopment of the Eagle and Columbia Mills;
- Expansion of planning efforts and the Brownfields Area-Wide Plan;
- Leveraging federal investment through tax credits, MassDevelopment, MassWorks and more.

4.c. Economic and Community Benefits

4.c.i. Economic or Non-Economic Benefits

The outcomes and economic benefits achieved through the redevelopment of the sites assessed under this grant include both increased employment and expanded tax base. This project will stimulate economic development within the community by revitalizing an important industrial area that once provided hundreds of jobs. The target sites once provided hundreds of jobs and through site assessment and redevelopment are expected to become employment hubs once again. It is anticipated that the target area will be revitalized by a mixture of housing, retail, commercial, business and institutional development. Redevelopment concepts currently being further developed under the AWP include small scale industrial, manufacturing and distribution, true mixed-use, micro-brewery or craft food, offices, hotel and commercial spaces. The location of the target area in relation to the downtown and the dense residential neighborhoods that surround it provides a distinct opportunity for the successful redevelopment and marketing of the properties within the area. Market Studies conducted for the Eagle Mill under the 43D Expedited Permitting Grant program and the AWP indicate that these types of development can be supported.

In addition, the community has shown strong support for a multi-use trail along the river through the project area. This concept is supported by the current owners and prospective developers and the Lee Bike Committee is currently undertaking work to finalize the route and prepare conceptual designs for the trail.

4.c.ii. Job Creation Potential: Partnerships with Workforce Development Programs

There is no local environmental job training program. However, the Town of Lee will coordinate with BRPC, the Berkshire County Regional Employment Board, Berkshire Community College and the McCann Vocational Technical School to provide opportunities such as internships on

environmental projects. In addition, provisions will be included in bid documents for hiring local contractors to provide opportunities for experience in environmental cleanups.

It is anticipated the approximately 20 construction jobs will be created through the Eagle Mill redevelopment alone, and an additional 100 through the creation of a hotel at the site. As previously mentioned, the reuse concepts currently being developed under the AWP include job creation within each of the four target sites. These figures do not include jobs retained through support such as, LSP, historic preservation consultants, civil engineers, etc.

5. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

5.a. Programmatic Capability

As a small rural community, Lee does not have the resources to hire a full time community development staff. The Town intends to enter into an inter-municipal agreement with its regional planning agency, BRPC, for assistance in meeting the project management, procurement and reporting requirements of the grant. As mentioned earlier, EPA has determined that the use of an inter-municipal agreement complies with 40 CFR Part 31.36.

BRPC has a dedicated and experienced staff responsible for meeting the various requirements of state and federal agencies. BRPC has extensive experience with EPA Brownfields Grants and engaging with qualified environmental professionals. Melissa Provencher is the Brownfields Program Coordinator for BRPC and currently serves as project manager for Lee's EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant and AWP Project. Ms. Provencher has been with BRPC for fifteen years. She has closed out numerous successful Assessment Grants including an ARRA funded Coalition Assessment Grant. The Town will work with BRPC to hire a QEP who is experienced in conducting Phase I/II ESAs and Remedial Action and Reuse Plans.

5.b. Audit Findings

The Town has not had adverse audit findings with the administration of any grants since 2006. At that time, a compliance finding relating to the monitoring of a grant sub-recipient was issued. The Town immediately corrected the oversight by formalizing a contract with the sub-recipient and reviewing the sub-recipient's single audit reports.

5.c. Past Performance and Accomplishments

5.c.i. Currently Has Received an EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant

5.c.i.1. *Compliance with grant requirements:* The Town received an FY11 EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant and an FY13 EPA Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Grant. The cleanup grant has been successfully completed and closed out. The AWP is on schedule and within budget. Additional funding is needed since the AWP is specific planning and the necessary assessment work is ineligible for those funds. The Town has worked with BRPC to successfully manage and remain in compliance with the work plans, schedules, and terms and conditions for both grants.

5.c.i.2. *Accomplishments*

FY11 EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant (10/1/12 – 9/30/15): This project was successfully completed and closed on schedule. A Response Action Outcome with no further action required was filed with MassDEP. Upon closing the grant, the property was purchased by a neighbor.

FY13 EPA Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Grant (10/1/13 – 9/30/16): This project is on time and on budget. A draft BFAWP will be released for public comment in Spring 2016.

THRESHOLD CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT GRANTS

1. Applicant Eligibility

The Town of Lee is a General Purpose Unit of Local Government as defined by 40 CFR Part 31.

2. Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) was notified of the Town of Lee's intent to apply for funding under the EPA Assessment program, and has issued a Letter of Acknowledgment in support of the Town's proposal (please see attached).

3. Community Involvement

The Town of Lee has created planning partnerships with community based organizations, stakeholders, and property owners through previous planning initiatives conducted within the target area. In addition, the Town has been working with an active stakeholders group for the past two years that was formed under their FY13 Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Grant. The stakeholder group includes local non-profits, businesses, educational institutions, residents and local officials. Representatives of the site owners and developers are active participants in the stakeholder group.

The stakeholders group will provide oversight throughout the assessment and planning process. Regular meetings of the stakeholder group will be held to inform planning efforts. In addition, crucial input will be solicited from the community. Community outreach will be conducted and participation will be solicited through print, web and social media and outreach through the project partners. A minimum of three public meetings will be held focusing on existing conditions, assessment activities, and re-use planning. These meetings will include providing information to the public about planned assessment activities and their results.

The community-based organizations that are project partners include the Lee Community Development Corporation, the Lee Chamber of Commerce and the Housatonic Valley Association. Letters of support and commitment are attached. These community-based organizations have committed to participating in the following ways:

- Coordinating outreach efforts;
- Providing various expertise;
- Organizing and facilitating community-wide and neighborhood discussions;
- Working with property owners;
- Hosting presentations and community meetings;
- Providing space on electronic and hard copy sources for project updates and notices; and
- Providing appropriate educational programs on brownfield impacts.

4. Site Eligibility and Property Ownership Eligibility(Site-Specific Proposals Only)

Not applicable as this application is for a Community-wide assessment grant.



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

Department of Environmental Protection

One Winter Street Boston, MA 02108 • 617-292-5500

Charles D. Baker
Governor

Karyn E. Polito
Lieutenant Governor

Matthew A. Beaton
Secretary

Martin Suuberg
Commissioner

December 6, 2015

U.S. EPA New England
Attn: Frank Gardner
5 Post Office Square, Suite 100
Mail Code: OSRR07-3
Boston, MA 02109-3912

RE: STATE LETTER OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT
Town of Lee, Application for EPA Assessment Grant Funds

Dear Mr. Gardner:

I am writing to support the proposal submitted by the Town of Lee (Town) under the Fiscal Year 2016 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfield Assessment Grant Program. The Town of Lee has, in the past, received an Area-Wide Planning Grant that allowed it to plan and implement a strategy for the redevelopment of the Lee Northern Mills Brownfields Planning Area, a 700-acre area that abuts the downtown area and is comprised of four vacant or underutilized paper mills. The area has been identified as a priority of the local community and the EPA. Hence, the Town is seeking to secure funding for the assessment of the Lee Northern Mills as a next step in redevelopment and revitalization to include a hotel, restaurant, retail businesses, offices, and residential space.

In Massachusetts, state and federal agencies have developed strong partnerships and work together to ensure that parties undertaking Brownfield projects have access to available incentives. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), through our regional officers, provides technical support to Brownfield project proponents when regulatory issues arise. If this proposal is selected, MassDEP will work with our state and federal partners to provide the support to the Town that will be needed to help make this project a success.

We greatly appreciate EPA's continued support of Brownfield efforts here in Massachusetts.

Sincerely,

Kerry Bowie
Brownfields Coordinator, MassDEP Commissioner's Office

cc: Patricia Carlino, Chairman, Lee Board of Selectmen
Robert Nason, Town of Lee Administrator
Melissa Provencher, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
Eva Tor, Brownfields Coordinator, MassDEP Western Regional Office
Angela Gallagher, Assistant Brownfields Coordinator, MassDEP Southeast Regional Office

Lee Community Development Corporation

December 8, 2015

Town of Lee
Attn: Bob Nason, Town Administrator
32 Main Street
Lee, MA 01238

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

David Bruce, President
John Toole, Vice President
Chauncey Collins, Treasurer
Marilyn Hansen, Clerk
Patricia Carlino
William Enser
Dan Holmes
Raymond Murray III
John Philpott
Bruce Singer
Al Skrocki

413-243-5528
leecdc@ymail.com

RE: Town of Lee – 2016 Brownfields Assessment Grant Application

Dear Mr. Nason:

The Lee Community Development Corporation wishes to express its strong support for the FY16 Brownfields Assessment grant application being submitted by the Town of Lee. The Lee Community Development Corporation is a non-profit community-based organization dedicated to fostering economic development and employment in the Town of Lee. We have successfully completed multiple downtown initiatives that transformed our Main Street, continue to market a business park and are involved in additional downtown redevelopment projects. For 28 years the community has seen the benefit of many public and public/private ventures initiated by the CDC. From a program to bring incubator businesses into town in conjunction with its Lee Corporate Center, to assisting ongoing businesses with economic development opportunities, to a focus on the revitalization of Downtown through numerous ventures which addressed the character, culture, infrastructure, retail environment and employment opportunities, and to earnestly pursuing the reuse of the now abandoned mill complexes scattered throughout town, the Lee CDC remains a vital part of shaping the community that is Lee.

Over the past five years, Lee, the birthplace of the American paper industry, has been confronted with the closure of five specialty paper mills and the associated loss of several hundred quality jobs. It is critical that suitable reuses are found for these sites and buildings, most of which are located within neighborhoods in the town. Four of the vacant sites are clustered along the Housatonic River, starting on the north end of the downtown (the Eagle Mill) and include the Columbia Mill (which includes a wastewater treatment plant which served a number of the mills and a dam), Greylock Mill, and Niagara Mill (which is immediately across the town line in the Town of Lenox). Together they represent close to 500,000 square feet of space on 175 acres, all prime for reuse. Given their historic use as paper mills, we can presume that all four mill sites have some level of contamination and are brownfields. The CDC, along with the Town and other regional organizations, through an EPA Area-wide Planning Grant awarded in FY13, is conducting an in-depth assessment of the environmental and structural conditions of these mills with an eye towards reuse potential and eventual economic contribution to the Town of Lee.

We will support the program in the following ways:

- A member of the Lee CDC Board will continue to serve on the Berkshire Brownfields Committee, which provides policy guidance to BRPC's program and approves allocations of assessment funds to specific projects in the region. The Lee CDC has been represented on the Committee since its formation in 2006 and will continue to participate in the Committee and in its decision-making processes.
- We will assist in identifying sites which potentially need Phase I or Phase II assessments in the Town of Lee. As the lead organization in promoting regional economic development in Town, we are often approached

regarding sites which may be available or needed for business development and/or expansion, and can refer both property owners and prospects to the BRPC Brownfields Assessment Program.

- We will assist in publicizing the Regional Brownfields Program, particularly to prospective users of the program or property owners who may be interested in marketing their site for economic development purposes in the Town.
- We will assist property owners who have approached us with potential sites to market that may need assessments. We are in the unique position to assist BRPC in gaining access to sites for assessment activities. Our having the trust of a property owner in helping them take the initial steps in readying their property for redevelopment is an important component in making the Regional Brownfields Program successful.
- We will continue working closely with the owners of the previously mentioned mill buildings and the Brownfields Assessment Program to insure progress toward realization of establishing a Northern Mills Redevelopment Plan for those properties.

The Lee Community Development Corporation hopes that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency looks favorably on the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission's Brownfields Assessment Program and provides funding to it in this funding round. We are pleased to be able to play a leading role in actually developing the area-wide plan and in the subsequent implementation activities.

Very truly yours,



Marilyn Hansen
Lee CDC



LEE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

3 PARK PLACE, LEE, MA 01238

December 11, 2015

Mr. Robert Nason, Town Administrator
Lee Town Hall
32 Main Street
Lee MA 01238

RE: Town of Lee - 2016 Brownfields Assessment Grant Application

Dear Robert:

The Lee Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) strongly supports the Town of Lee's 2016 Brownfield Assessment grant application. The Chamber is the largest business-supported organization in Lee, representing manufacturers, retailers, the hospitality sector and others. The purpose and objective of the Chamber is to promote and advance the economic, civic and social welfare of Lee.

In 2008 Lee was confronted with the closure of four specialty paper mills and the associated loss of several hundred quality jobs. It is critical that suitable reuses are found for these vacant sites, as they cast a derelict shadow of unknown over the neighborhoods in which they are located. Given their historic use as paper mills, we can presume that all the sites have some level of contamination and are brownfields.

We highlight the fact that the proposed project follows an Area-wide Planning Project, which included an inclusive public outreach process in which Lee residents and business owners were asked to help the town envision new uses for the sites that would benefit both the landowners and the community at large. We now look forward to the next step in the process, which is to confirm or dismiss the presence of hazardous materials and petroleum products at these sites.

Keeping the public informed, particularly the neighborhoods surround the mills, is an important part of assessment and reuse projects, and the Lee Chamber can serve as a key partner in keeping the business community apprised of the project's progress. The Chamber commits to offer the following support:

- Host presentations and community meetings
- Discuss project updates at regular chamber meetings
- Provide space on our website, Facebook pages and listserv for project updates and notices
- Report of project progress in newsletters and other social media outlets
- Provide expert advice (financial, organizational, legal, otherwise)
- Provide educational programs on brownfields
- Include updated information with our community-wide communications

The Chamber hopes that EPA looks favorably on the proposal by the Town of Lee and we look forward to assisting the Town in any way possible to make this project a success.

Sincerely,

Franck Tessier
Board President

Colleen A. Henry
Executive Director

PHONE: 413.243.0852 ❖ EMAIL: info@leechamber.org ❖ WEB SITE: www.leechamber.org



Housatonic Valley Association

150 Kent Road
P.O. Box 28
Cornwall Bridge, CT 06754
860-672-6678

www.hvatoday.org

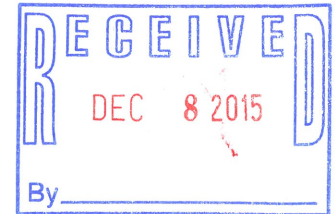
1383 Pleasant Street
P.O. Box 251
South Lee, MA 01260
413-394-9796

19 Furnace Bank Road
P.O. Box 315
Wassaic, NY 12592
845-789-1381

DRAFT

11/2/15

Town of Lee
Bob Nason, Town Administrator
32 Main Street
Lee, MA 01238



RE: Letter of Support: 2016 Brownfields Assessment Grant Application

To Whom it May Concern:

The Housatonic Valley Association, (HVA) would like to express its strong support for the FY16 Brownfields Assessment grant application being submitted by the Town of Lee, Massachusetts. HVA is a non-profit watershed association whose mission is to 'protect the natural character and environmental health of the entire Housatonic River Watershed for this and future generations'. If funded, this Brownfields Assessment project will allow the community of Lee effectively expand the work that has been accomplished to date in moving the various abandoned and deteriorated sites through the needed assessments for restoration and redevelopment.

The town's partner in this project, the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, (BNRC) has conducted over fifty assessments in their very active brownfields program over the past six years. Various clean-ups or redevelopment projects have been completed or are underway on a number of sites as a result of this program and a similar number have been successfully closed. At this point, BRPC's assessment funding has all been expended and there is no funding available for further needed site assessments. As an environmental advocate, we see the vital need to maintain a regional brownfields assessment program that can assist in the difficult process of assessing and restoring sites to protect our local environment.

HVA views the BRPC's Regional Brownfields Assessment Program to be a critical initiative in implementing riverside community restoration efforts that will greatly aid in the protection to the environment of the Housatonic Watershed. We will support the program in the following ways:

- We will assist in identifying sites which potentially need Phase I, Phase II or Phase III assessments. As an organization that has created numerous river assessment projects throughout the watershed, and with members throughout the area, we become aware of sites which may need brownfields assessments and can refer property owners and to the BRPC Brownfields Assessment Program.

- We will assist in publicizing the Regional Brownfields Program through our regular e-newsletter, and our website.
- We are able to host presentations about the regional Brownfields Assessment Program to our membership.

On behalf of the Housatonic Valley Association, we hope that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency looks favorably on the Lee, and Berkshire Regional Planning Commission's Brownfields Assessment Program and provides additional funding to it in this funding round. This is an important component in protecting our regional environment and strengthening our communities.

Sincerely,



Dennis C. Regan
Berkshire Director

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

* 1. Type of Submission:

- ☐ Preapplication
☒ Application
☐ Changed/Corrected Application

* 2. Type of Application:

- ☒ New
☐ Continuation
☐ Revision

* If Revision, select appropriate letter(s):

* Other (Specify):

* 3. Date Received:

12/14/2015

4. Applicant Identifier:

5a. Federal Entity Identifier:

5b. Federal Award Identifier:

State Use Only:

6. Date Received by State:

7. State Application Identifier:

8. APPLICANT INFORMATION:

* a. Legal Name:

Town of Lee

* b. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN):

04-6001196

* c. Organizational DUNS:

1066229700000

d. Address:

* Street1:

32 Main Street

Street2:

* City:

Lee

County/Parish:

* State:

MA: Massachusetts

Province:

* Country:

USA: UNITED STATES

* Zip / Postal Code:

01238-1612

e. Organizational Unit:

Department Name:

Division Name:

f. Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving this application:

Prefix:

* First Name:

Robert

Middle Name:

* Last Name:

Nason

Suffix:

Title:

Town Administrator

Organizational Affiliation:

* Telephone Number:

413-243-5501

Fax Number:

* Email:

bnason@town.lee.ma.us

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

* 9. Type of Applicant 1: Select Applicant Type:

C: City or Township Government

Type of Applicant 2: Select Applicant Type:

Type of Applicant 3: Select Applicant Type:

* Other (specify):

* 10. Name of Federal Agency:

Environmental Protection Agency

11. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:

66.818

CFDA Title:

Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup Cooperative Agreements

* 12. Funding Opportunity Number:

EPA-OSWER-OBLR-15-04

* Title:

FY16 Guidelines for Brownfields Assessment Grants

13. Competition Identification Number:

Title:

14. Areas Affected by Project (Cities, Counties, States, etc.):

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

* 15. Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project:

Town of Lee Brownfields Assessment

Attach supporting documents as specified in agency instructions.

Add Attachments

Delete Attachments

View Attachments

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424**16. Congressional Districts Of:**

* a. Applicant MA001

* b. Program/Project MA001

Attach an additional list of Program/Project Congressional Districts if needed.

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

17. Proposed Project:

* a. Start Date: 10/01/2016

* b. End Date: 09/30/2019

18. Estimated Funding (\$):

* a. Federal	300,000.00
* b. Applicant	0.00
* c. State	0.00
* d. Local	0.00
* e. Other	0.00
* f. Program Income	0.00
* g. TOTAL	300,000.00

*** 19. Is Application Subject to Review By State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?**

- ☐ a. This application was made available to the State under the Executive Order 12372 Process for review on .
- ☐ b. Program is subject to E.O. 12372 but has not been selected by the State for review.
- ☒ c. Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.

*** 20. Is the Applicant Delinquent On Any Federal Debt? (If "Yes," provide explanation in attachment.)**☐ Yes ☒ No

If "Yes", provide explanation and attach

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

21. *By signing this application, I certify (1) to the statements contained in the list of certifications and (2) that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also provide the required assurances** and agree to comply with any resulting terms if I accept an award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001)**

☒ ** I AGREE

** The list of certifications and assurances, or an internet site where you may obtain this list, is contained in the announcement or agency specific instructions.

Authorized Representative:

Prefix: * First Name: Patricia

Middle Name:

* Last Name: Carlino

Suffix:

* Title: Select Board Chair

* Telephone Number: 413-243-5500 Fax Number:

* Email: cbelair@town.lee.ma.us

* Signature of Authorized Representative: Melissa Provencher * Date Signed: 12/14/2015